UNITED NATIONS **ST**

Secretariat

ST/IC/1998/28
25 March 1998

INFORMATION CIRCULAR*

To: Members of the staff

From: The Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management

Subject: 1998 COMPETITIVE EXAMINATION FOR ARABIC INTERPRETERS

1. The purpose of the present information circular is to invite applications from staff members of the Secretariat at the P-3 level and below who wish to take the competitive examination for Arabic interpreters in 1998, in accordance with the provisions of ST/AI/1998/7 of 23 March 1998.

2. A competitive examination for Arabic interpreters will be held on 23 and 24 June 1998 in New York, Geneva, Vienna and other locations according to the number and location of qualified candidates invited to take the examination, and the availability of necessary technical equipment. The purpose of the examination is to establish a roster from which present and future vacancies for Arabic interpreters will be filled.

3. The examination is open to staff members of the United Nations at the P-3 level and below who meet the eligibility requirements, as well as qualified external candidates. Staff members from subsidiary organs of the United Nations and staff members whose service is limited to a particular organ, fund or programme of the United Nations or special missions are considered external candidates for the purpose of this examination. Staff members who pass the examination and are selected for inclusion in the roster will be assigned in New York to fill vacancies as they occur in the Arabic Interpretation Section, Interpretation, Meetings and Publishing Division, Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services, of the United Nations Secretariat. Assignments are subject to rotation and interpreters may thereafter be called upon to serve at other duty stations in Asia and Europe according to the needs of the Organization. Interpreters are expected to serve a MINIMUM OF FIVE YEARS in a language post. The assignment of staff members of the United Nations who are

* Expiration date of the present information circular: 30 June 1999.

successful in the examination and are selected to fill vacancies will be subject to the conditions set out in paragraphs 10 and 11 below.

4. Staff members of the Secretariat applying for the examination must:

(a) Have Arabic as their main language;1/

(b) Have a perfect command of Arabic and an excellent knowledge of English and/or French. The Board of Examiners, appointed by the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management, requires that candidates' claims to knowledge of official languages must be supported by relevant documentation in their official status files. For this purpose, staff members should either attach to their application a photocopy of a diploma or a certificate from a language school or a brief explanation of how they acquired their knowledge of the languages claimed. Staff members are advised to submit photocopies, not originals, of such documentation;

(c) Hold a degree or an equivalent qualification from a university or institution of equivalent status at which Arabic is the language of instruction and have 200 days of experience as conference interpreters, or 200 days of work experience in the field of translation, editing, verbatim reporting or related fields. Alternatively, candidates must hold a university degree from a recognized school of interpretation. The Board of Examiners may, at its discretion, admit a candidate graduating from a university whose principal language of instruction is other than Arabic, provided he/she has adequate secondary educational qualifications from an establishment at which the principal language of instruction is Arabic.

5. The requirement for a university degree or its equivalent from a university or institution of equivalent status mentioned in paragraph 4 (c) above may be waived for staff members who, in the judgement of the Board of Examiners, have adequate post-secondary educational qualifications from a university or institution of equivalent status and adequate secondary educational qualifications from an establishment at which the principal language of instruction is Arabic, in addition to five years of continuous service with the United Nations Secretariat by 31 December 1989.

6. All applications will be reviewed by the Board of Examiners. All applicants will be notified of the Board's decision in respect of their application. THE BOARD'S DECISIONS ARE FINAL.

7. The examination will consist of two parts:

(a) Simultaneous interpretation into Arabic from recordings of four speeches delivered in English or French (approximately 5 to 10 minutes per recording). Candidates may opt to interpret into Arabic from both English and French if so desired. Only the candidate's scores in the language in which he/she performed higher will be taken into account in the marking;

(b) Simultaneous interpretation into English or French from recordings of four speeches delivered in Arabic (approximately 5 to 10 minutes per recording).

Candidates may opt to interpret into both English and French from Arabic if so desired. Only the candidate's scores in the language in which he/she performed higher will be taken into account in the marking.

8. On the basis of the results of this examination, the Board of Examiners will invite selected candidates to an interview, which is projected to take place in the second half of September 1998. The Board will interview the selected candidates to assess general interests, professional experience, knowledge of the United Nations and of current events, personality, willingness to serve at any duty station, adaptability to the prevailing working conditions in the Arabic Interpretation Section and, in particular, ability to work as a member of a team. The interview is an integral part of the examination. Therefore, candidates who are invited for an interview should NOT assume that they will be offered an assignment.

9. On the basis of the overall results of the examination, the Board will recommend to the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management the names of candidates who qualify for inclusion in the roster. All candidates admitted to the examination will be informed in writing of the Board's final recommendation in respect of their candidature. The Board's recommendations are NOT subject to appeal. The Board DOES NOT release individual scores/results.

10. Staff members selected to fill vacancies will be assigned as Arabic interpreters for a trial period of two years. Staff members at the P-1 level or below will receive a special post allowance to the P-2 level. Staff members at the P-2 and P-3 levels will be assigned at their respective levels.

11. Staff members with a special post allowance to the P-2 level and those already at the P-2 level who complete the trial period successfully and are recommended by the Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services and the Office of Human Resources Management will be promoted to the P-3 level. Staff members already at the P-3 level who complete the trial period successfully will be confirmed in their interpretation functions at the P-3 level. Staff members who do not complete the trial period successfully will be reassigned to posts at their previous levels and the special post allowance, if any, will be discontinued.

Those staff members on fixed-term appointment who complete the trial period successfully will be considered for permanent appointment under the provisions of General Assembly resolution 51/226 on the granting of career appointments.

12. In order to service meetings of the Security Council or the General Assembly, interpreters are often called upon to work outside normal working hours, including weekends and holidays.

13. Staff members applying for the examination should complete the attached form and submit it, NOT LATER THAN 15 May 1998, to:

1998 Competitive Examination for Arabic Interpreters
Specialist Services Division
Office of Human Resources Management
Room S-2575E
United Nations Secretariat
New York, N.Y. 10017
Fax No.: (1-212) 963-3683

14. In order to ensure receipt of all applications submitted by staff members from offices away from Headquarters, these staff members are requested to return their applications directly to the Specialist Services Division through the chief administrative officer or director of the United Nations information centre of their respective duty stations by 15 May 1998, the deadline for receipt of applications in the Specialist Services Division, OHRM.

Notes

1/ "Main language" should be understood to be the language into which the candidate is best able to interpret. Candidates' claims to Arabic as their main language must be supported by relevant documentation in their official status files.

APPLICATION

1998 COMPETITIVE EXAMINATION FOR ARABIC INTERPRETERS 1/

INDEX NO. 2/ /_/_/_/_/_/_/

LAST NAME /_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/ Category /_/_/ Level /_/_/

FIRST NAME /_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/ Sex: Male /_/ Female /_/

Date of entry on duty: Month /_/_/ Year 19 /_/_/

Type of contract: _____ Expiration date: _____

Department/Office 3/ _____ Duty station: _____

Room No. _____ Extension _____

Have you taken this examination before? Yes /_/ in 19 /_/_/ No /_/

Have you taken another United Nations competitive examination? Yes /_/ in 19 /_/_/ No /_/

If yes, which examination(s) _____

What is your main language? 4/ /_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/

A. Knowledge of other languages 5/

Language(s)	United Nations language programme (Indicate highest level and date)	Courses taken at other institutions (name and location)

B. Indicate your ability in each of the languages mentioned above

	Read		Understand		Speak		Write	
Language	Easily	Not easily	Easily	Not easily	Fluently	Not fluently	Easily	Not easily

/...

C. University degree or equivalent or post-secondary educational qualifications 6/

Name of institution Place and country	Language of instruction	Attended from/to month/year	Attended from/to month/year	Degree 6/ or equivalent	Main field of study

D. Secondary school qualifications

Name of institution Place and country	Language of instruction	Attended from/to month/year	Attended from/to month/year	Certificate or equivalent 6/	Main field of study

E. Describe work experience (giving dates and length of time) in conference interpretation or related fields, if any.

I have read information circular ST/IC/1998/28 and I understand that, if I am successful in the competitive examination for Arabic interpreters and recommended for inclusion in the roster, my assignment as an Arabic interpreter will be subject to my acceptance of the conditions of service indicated in paragraphs 10 and 11 of that circular.

Date: _____ Signature: _____

I certify that the information I have provided above is correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Date: _____ Signature: _____

Notes

1/ Staff members applying for this examination MUST COMPLETE THIS SECTION. In addition, staff members MUST ATTACH written proof of claimed secondary educational qualifications from establishments at which Arabic is the principal language of instruction. Written proof of claimed post-secondary education must also be attached unless they were convoked for the G to P examination for promotion to the Professional category or another language examination. Applications that are incomplete or do not include essential information or documentation will be returned to the staff member FOR COMPLETION AND RESUBMISSION WITHIN THE DEADLINE FOR RECEIPT OF APPLICATIONS in the Specialist Services Division. In this connection, staff members are informed that extensions for receipt of applications in the Specialist Services Division will NOT be granted. Therefore, staff members are advised to submit their applications without delay.

2/ Appears normally on your monthly salary statement and personnel action forms. If not, please contact your Executive Officer to obtain your number.

3/ Please indicate Department/Office, e.g., DGAACS, DESA, ECE, UNCTAD, UNOG, UNOV or other (specify).

4/ "Main language" should be understood to be the language into which the candidate is best able to interpret. Candidates' claims to Arabic as their main language must be supported by relevant documentation in their official status files.

5/ Candidates are reminded that they must submit relevant documentation to substantiate their claims as appropriate in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 4 (b) of information circular ST/IC/1998/28.

6/ Give exact name and title in original language. Do not translate or equate.